



# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

## news release

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release April 6, 1983

Inez Connor 202/343-5634

### NEXT FALL'S MIGRATORY GAME BIRD HUNTING FRAMEWORKS PROPOSED

Preliminary hunting regulations for ducks, geese, and other migratory game birds for the 1983-84 hunting season have been proposed by the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The proposals, published in the April 5, 1983, Federal Register, also outline the progress that has been made to date in jointly developing a coordinated program with Canada and States in the Atlantic and Mississippi Flyways to reduce the black duck harvest. Technical committees of both Flyway Councils presented recommendations that were approved by the Councils on March 19 and 20. After considering these recommendations, the Fish and Wildlife Service will propose a supplemental rulemaking on the black duck, probably in May. The Service had announced in the September 17, 1982, Federal Register that further restrictions on the harvest of black ducks would be necessary this year in a major effort to halt a long-term decline in the population. State and Federal wildlife agencies are also developing a coordinated information program to alert the public to the status of the black duck and to help hunters improve their ability to identify these birds.

No other major changes from last year's hunting regulations are proposed at this time. The proposed rulemaking describes tentative season frameworks, daily bag and possession limits, and shooting hours for migratory game birds in the contiguous United States, Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Species discussed in the proposals include ducks, geese, brant, and swans; doves and pigeons; cranes; rails; coots, and gallinules; and woodcock and snipe.

more

Shooting hours will remain from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset. Framework dates for most duck and goose seasons will be from October 1, 1983, to January 20, 1984, for the Atlantic and Mississippi Flyways and from October 1, 1983, through January 22, 1984, for the Central and Pacific Flyways. The framework proposed for the Alaska waterfowl season extends from September 1, 1983, through January 26, 1984.

All of the published proposals are subject to changes if the need is indicated by information obtained from surveys, State conservation agencies, and the public. Public comments on the proposals are invited through June 22, 1983, for Alaska, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands; July 15 for other "early" seasons (those opening before October 1); and August 19 for the "late" seasons (those opening after October 1). Comments should be addressed to the Director (FWS/MBMO), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

To ensure that the public has ample opportunity to comment on the proposals, two public hearings will be held to review the status of migratory game birds and consider proposed hunting regulations. The first hearing will pertain to "early" season regulations and will be held on June 22, 1983, at 9 a.m. in the Department of the Interior Auditorium on C Street between 18th and 19th Streets, N.W., in Washington, D.C. A second hearing on regulations for seasons opening on or after October 1 will be held on August 2, 1983, at 9 a.m., also in the Interior Department Auditorium. Persons wishing to participate in these hearings should write to the Director (FWS/MBMO), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240, or telephone 202/254-3207. Those wishing to make statements should file copies with the Director before or during each hearing.

x

x

x